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Mr. V. Sankaranarayana Iyer, B. A. & B. L. (Member, T. I. C., Nagercoil) said that, though as regards Nagercoil, the difficulty in getting Government sanction was experienced only in times of cholera, unnecessary correspondence and consequent delay might be avoided by allowing to the Committee a little more discretion in its internal management, and that it was therefore necessary to revise the Rules in respect of the Town Improvement Committees.

Mr. F. P. Fernandez (Member, T. I. C., Trivandrum) said that he agreed generally with Mr. Krishnan Pandalai. He knew of several instances in which the Committee applied for funds, and their requests were vetoed, although the Committee had proposed to raise money by taxation according to the Regulation. He added that the Trivandrum Committee was frequently handicapped for want of funds and he suggested that the Rules should be revised so as to allow greater powers to the Committees.

Mr. K. C. Mammen Mapillay, B. A. (Member, T. I. C., Kottayam) was absent.

Dewan's reply.—I note that there is a general feeling on the part of the Town Improvement Committees that they should have more discretion in the matter of spending their money and that Government sanction is now being insisted on in matters of detail which may well be left to the Committees. The question will be considered at an early date.

3. ***Superfluity of coins and the prevalence of counterfeit coins.***

Mr. S. Ganapathy Pillai (Member, Trivandrum Trading Classes) said that the coins that passed for legal tender in Travancore were, (1) of the British coins—the Rupee, the 8 anna piece, the 4 anna piece, the 2 anna piece and the one anna piece, and (2) of the Travancore coins—the half and quarter Rupee pieces, the one fanam piece, the one chackram, half chackram and one-fourth chackram pieces and the single cash, and that the difficulties felt by the merchants in dealing with these coins were very great. While, in other parts of India, money transactions were done in the day-time and by means of currency notes, in Travancore, they were carried on mostly in the evening, between 7 and 10 P. M., not by means of currency notes, but in small coins such as cash. The Bankers would collect the dues from their several customers in all sorts of coins and take them to their Banks at a late hour in the night. After describing the difficulties experienced and the loss of valuable time and money incurred in sorting and counting the several varieties of the

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coins so collected, the Member stated that, with the exception of the British Rupee, which was a common coin in Travancore, they had to deal with seven silver coins, while the people in British India dealt with only four. The small difference in value that existed between the two sets of British and Travancore coins gave the merchants much trouble in their dealings. Coins of different values were no doubt necessary for easy exchange; but when a superfluity of such coins was found to exist, trade would surely be hampered. The British Post and Telegraph Offices and the Bank of Madras in Travancore refused to accept the Travancore coins, while the Sirkar Treasuries had an aversion to accept the British coins of a lower denomination than the Rupee. The merchants on the other hand had to deal with a medley of *all* coins. In places in British India, where currency notes were not used as the medium of exchange, coins of the lower denominations were sparingly used in monetary transactions; whereas, in Travancore, they were used to the greatest extent. For instance, in British India, a payment of Rs. 500 would be made in 450 full Rupees and the rest in coins of lower value, while in Travancore the same amount would be paid in 200 full Rupees and the balance in all sorts of the 11 coins that passed for legal tender. The Member then stated that he did not mean that the Travancore silver coins should be stopped and a preference given to the British coins, or *vice versa*, but on the other hand he wished to point out that, if either of these coins *were* stopped from being current, the hardships caused to the merchants would be removed.

The Member then said that counterfeit coins had come into circulation and flooded the market, that more than 20 per cent of the current coins were counterfeit, and that every individual possessed these coins without his knowledge. He said that, in the case of the British coins, the number of counterfeit coins were comparatively few, because being of baser metal, such coins could be easily detected by the sound by any layman and also because the coins of the lower denominations were seldom counterfeited. The causes that led to this nefarious practice here (in Travancore) were (1) the lower price of bullion and the artificially higher face value of the coins made of silver and (2) the comparative ease with which the Travancore coins could be imitated and made. With a view to prevent counterfeiting, the Member suggested that (1) the quality and weight of the Travancore coin should be raised, so that the actual price of the silver and the value of the coin might almost be the same; (2) the appearance of the coin should be improved so as to render its

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imitation impossible; and (3) the vigilance of the Police should be effectively increased and employed in detecting attempts at counterfeiting. The gain derived by the Government from the Mint might perhaps become reduced by raising the quality and weight of the metal, but, as the existing state of affairs was found to give encouragement to counterfeiters and also tended to the circulation of false coins all over the country, the Government should not grudge to forego the small gain, in view to safe-guard the interests of the people. The Member concluded by saying that there was an urgent necessity for reform in the matter.

Dewan's reply.—The matter will be inquired into.

II. MAIN HEADS OF REVENUE.

(1) *Land Revenue.*

4. *Tharavila on backwater reclamations.*

Mr. George Baker (Member, Kottayam Taluk) said that the reclamation of backwaters had been going on for several years. The Government recently raised the *tharavila* on such reclamations from 1 Re. per acre to Rs. 25 per acre. The enhanced *tharavila* was far above all possibility for any ryot to pay and resort to such cultivation. But instead of making the higher rate applicable to future reclaimers, the ryots who had gone in for such reclamations and had already reclaimed large areas, in the belief and hope that they would get them for one Rupee an acre, were being asked to pay *tharavila* at Rs. 25 per acre. The ryots felt this as a heavy burden, especially because, unlike ordinary cultivations, one had to go in for large areas in the case of backwater reclamations to get any profit, and if the higher rate were insisted on, future reclamations would be impossible. The Member said that he could not perceive the reason for the action of the Government in trying to stop paddy cultivation, when it could not supply itself with all the paddy or rice it required, but had to import the latter in large quantities from year to year. Instead of helping the ryots to extend the area of such cultivation and encouraging reclamations by affording them all facilities, it was regrettable that the Government should have raised the *tharavila* to 25 times what it was. The Member promised to collect and furnish information as to what it would cost on an average to reclaim an acre, taking a large area into account. He requested that the Government might be pleased to take the above facts into consideration and reduce the *tharavila* to the original rate of one rupee per acre.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

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